

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

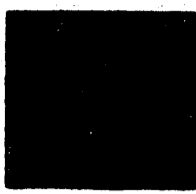
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EASTERN



F.O.
371

1947

PALESTINE

File No. 8286

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Reference:-

FO 371 / 61952

CLOSED
UNTIL
1978

61952

1947

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E 8286

PALESTINE

Registry Number

E 8286/8286/P1

FROM

The Arab

No.

Office

Dated

2 Sept

Received in Registry

9

Palestine Mandate.

Copy of note stating H.M.G. are obliged to hand back Palestine only to the Arabs and not to U.N. who at present are incumbent on H.M.G. to leave without changing the political status of Palestine or possibly altering the character and conditions of the country.

Last Paper

✓

(Minutes.)

References

This is probably typical of informal Arab opinion on the prospect of our withdrawal from Palestine.

(Print)

H.B. 9/9

(How disposed of)

61952

R. G. Farren
✓ 12/9

B. B. B.
15.9

(Action completed)

✓ 17/9

(Index)

✓ 19/9/48

Next Paper

8525

1	2	3	4	5	6

Reference:-
FO
371/61952

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Telephone : SLO 0724/5.
Cables : ARABOFFICE LONDON.

THE ARAB OFFICE, *E* ³
Emb

92, EATON PLACE,
LONDON, S.W.1.

E 8286

2nd copy.

Dear Harold,

Herewith the note about which
Muna, I believe spoke to you yesterday. He
asked me to have a copy put sent to you
personally.

[Signature]
Harold

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371/ 61952

1. His Majesty's Government cannot divest themselves of responsibility for future developments in Palestine, or discharge their solemn obligations to the Arabs by handing over the Mandate for Palestine to the United Nations; or by deciding to enforce any decision which the United Nations may take on the basis of the Committee's recommendations and then walk out of the country.
2. His Majesty's Government will have to decide first of all whether they wish to enjoy the friendship of the Arab world after leaving Palestine, or not.
3. If they wish to retain this friendship, they must see to it that they do nothing before leaving Palestine which would poison that friendship for ever; and that they leave Palestine in circumstances which would not be regarded by every Arab as a shocking act of betrayal.
4. To hand the Mandate over to the United Nations in present circumstances would be an act of betrayal. It would mean in fact delivering the Arabs into the hands of the Zionists who through their influence over the American Government, and through the American Government and its satellites on the United Nations, would be able to secure a settlement in their favour. Moreover, there is nothing in the terms of the Mandate itself to justify such a step. Lastly, the Arabs know that long before the League of Nations was born it had been decided by the British Government and the Zionist leaders that Britain should occupy Palestine at the end of the first World War, and help the Zionists carry out their purpose; they know, that is to say, that it was not the League of Nations which decided to entrust the Mandate to Britain as an international obligation but Britain which sought and obtained the Mandate for the purpose she had then in mind, and that therefore the responsibility for what has happened to the Arabs in Palestine lies with Britain. Knowing all this, the Arabs feel that it is for Britain to right the wrong she did them before she leaves Palestine. To hand the Mandate back to the United Nations or to enforce an anti-Arab solution on behalf of the United Nations before she leaves would be to complete and seal that wrong.
5. If His Majesty's Government therefore decide to withdraw from Palestine either now or in two or three years' time, it is incumbent on them to leave without changing the political status of Palestine or forcibly altering the character and conditions of the country. When they came to Palestine, Palestine was an Arab country. It must still be an Arab country when they leave. It was from its people that they took Palestine; it is to its people that they must return it when they leave.
6. The Arabs would not be averse to a British withdrawal, but this must take place without any change being made in the status of the country, and provided the country was handed back not to U.N.O. but to its own people. The Arabs realise that if this happened there would be a short interval of war between them and the Jews, but they are convinced that a state of equilibrium would be reached and that the country, without suffering any mutilation or change of status, would settle down to normal life in a short time.

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E 8529

16 SEP 47

PALESTINE

Registry Number

E 8529/8286/31

FROM

7 0 Minute

No.

W Beeley

Dated

Received in Registry

5 Sept 16

Musa Bey Alami, views on UNSCOP Report.

Rest of conversation with MUSA BEY ALAMI when he was told that his condemnation of UNSCOP minority proposals might have been based on insufficient study of its details. Also reports subsequent conversation with ATTIYAH, who said on behalf of MUSA that he had a chance of settlement on basis of Memorandum

Last Paper.

8286

(Minutes.)

N.B. 16/9

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

(Action completed.)

P.C. 16/9

(Index.)

24/10/47

Next Paper.

10717

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Reference: FO 371/61952

E 8529

TOP SECRET

16

Two or three days ago I suggested to Musa Bey Alami, the Director-General of the Arab Offices and the Mufti's rival for the leadership of the Palestine Arabs, that his condemnation of the minority proposal in the report of the United Nations Committee might have been based on insufficient study of its details, and said that this plan did not seem to me to be unfavourable to the Arabs. I also expressed the hope that the Arab delegates in the General Assembly would not again isolate themselves by taking up a totally intransigent position.

Musa Bey has since received the full text of the report, and after reading it he sent Mr. Atiyah of the Arab Office to see me this morning, with instructions to say that Musa Bey now sees a chance of settlement on the basis of the minority plan. He does not think, however, that the Arab delegates will dare to make any favourable comment on this plan unless they have some previous understanding with H.M. Government. Given such an understanding on the other hand, he thinks they could be persuaded to co-operate in an attempt to secure the endorsement of the Assembly for the minority plan with certain amendments. Points at which, in Musa Bey's opinion, the proposal would require amendment are the following:

- (i) The use of the word "State" to describe the local Arab and Jewish Administrations. Musa Bey points out (rightly in my view) that, in view of the powers allocated to them, the two "States" would more properly be described as provinces or cantons, and argues that the word "State" would leave the Arabs of Palestine with the feeling that the door is still being left open to partition.
- (ii) He had not seen a map illustrating the minority proposal, but he thought some modification of the frontiers would be necessary.
- (iii) He would prefer Jewish immigration during the period of transition, to be regulated by a body upon which the Arabs were not represented.
- (iv) He is doubtful of the wisdom of invoking the arbitral body for all kinds of legislation, and wonders whether the legislative

process/

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process might not be simplified for subjects of secondary importance, leaving the resort to arbitration to be used only for immigration and other major issues liable to arouse national antagonism.

I asked about the probable reaction of the Arab population of Palestine to a proposal on these lines. Mr. Atiyah said that it was Musa Bey's view that the Mufti would attempt to provoke a rising in Palestine whatever happened. If the partition proposal put forward by the majority of the United Nations Committee were adopted, the rising would command universal support. If the General Assembly were to adopt the minority plan in its present form, the rising might still be fairly successful. If the minority plan could be sufficiently amended to make it appear that concessions had been made to the Arab point of view, there was a good chance that the rising would be a failure.

I then said that it was most improbable that H.M. Government would be in a position to discuss the minority proposals with the Arab States in the near future. At least during the early stages of the Assembly, the Arab delegations must operate independently. Looking farther ahead, I did not know what the attitude of H.M. Government to the plan was likely to be, and I could offer no guarantee on that point. But I hoped that meanwhile the Arab delegations in New York would not, by taking up an intransigent position, destroy in advance any prospect which might perhaps arise at a later stage for an agreement.

Mr. Atiyah replied that Musa Bey had asked him to impress upon me the importance of seizing what might be a fleeting opportunity for an Anglo-Arab understanding on the Palestine question. He was afraid that if H.M. Government were not ready in time to work for this understanding, the Arab delegations would commit themselves in such a way as to make it impossible, and the opportunity would be lost.

Finally, Mr. Atiyah asked whether I thought there would be any point in a further interview between Musa Bey and the Secretary of State. Remembering the great interest taken by the Secretary of State in Musa Bey's representations when they last met, I said that I was sure he would be welcome at an appropriate time. But I did not think the present moment was suitable.

RECEIVED IN C.B.
15 SEP 1947
SENT TO DEPT.
16 SEP 1947

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

*J. Connors
Met. ...
now ...
Studying ...
reports ...*

*"I cannot meet him
now. I am studying
both reports" E.B.*

*I think S/S saw see
this. P. ...
G.A. Waring
19.*

*H.B. ...
5th September, 1947*

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3

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E 10717
17 NOV

8

PALESTINE

Registry Number

E10717/8286/31

FROM

40. Minute

No.

M. Jaman

Dated

30 Oct.

Received in Registry

17 Nov

*Palatine Arab Office Representative.
Interview with Mr. Cecile Hourani, who runs
the Arab Office in New York, who after
general discussion on Palestine, expressed the
hope that the P.P.P. might feel able to
receive Mr. Bey Alami at some early date,*

Last Paper.

8529

(Minutes.)

References.

*Mr Grayson
Mr Bedley on return*

JB Nov. 17

(Print.)

*H.B. 227
12*

(How disposed of.)

(Action completed.)

J.L.M. 22/12

(Index)

14/9/48

Next Paper.

E 10792

32003 F.O.P

1	
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4	
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References:-

FO 371 / 61952

10717
17 NOV

PALESTINE.

Mr. Cecil Hourani, who runs the Arab Office in New York, came to see me this morning.

He said that he particularly wanted to put forward some ideas about what was to be left behind in Palestine in the event of a British withdrawal. He said that thinking Arabs were very disturbed at the chaos which might ensue if we were to withdraw and leave no kind of administration behind.

I pointed out that in the absence of any agreement between the Arabs and the Jews, there were two alternative possibilities. Either (a) the United Nations would reach agreement on a settlement of Palestine, which would involve the adoption of the necessary measures for its implementation. In that case, the responsibility for the administration of Palestine would devolve upon the United Nations, and H.M. Government's decision as to whether they would or would not participate in such administration or in the implementation of the United Nations settlement would depend on how just and practicable that settlement appeared to them to be. The alternative (b) was that there should be no agreement in the United Nations and Great Britain should then announce its decision to withdraw at a very early date.

Mr. Hourani said that he was thinking of alternative (b). If, in those circumstances, we withdrew and left nothing behind, there must be chaos and bloodshed. There were, however, both in the Arab and Jewish parts of Palestine, elected municipal bodies, from whom representatives could be chosen to form a central government. However, for such an administration to be successful, it was essential:-

- (a) that it should be given adequate police forces to maintain order.
- (b) That the extremist elements on both sides, i.e. the Arab Higher Committee (and the Mufti) and the Jewish Agency, should be kept out of the way.

I pointed out that these conditions seemed to me to present very serious, if not insuperable, difficulties. He was evidently expecting H.M. Government to provide the necessary police force, or at least to organise it, and to keep the extremists away. Besides, to take such action, even if it were practicable, would ~~be~~ contrary to the declared intention of H.M. Government to withdraw, lock, stock and barrel, if there was no settlement. I said that this was a drastic and brutal decision, but the circumstances left H.M.

Government/

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It will primarily depend on whether Jews & Arabs both accept it. *[Signature]*

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371/61952

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Minutes.

Government with no alternative. Besides, the threat of such action by H.M. Government offered the one hope of making the extremists on both sides see reason and work towards a settlement.

Mr. Hourani reverted to the need to give the people of Palestine a chance to work out their own future without the interference of the extremists on both sides, whose views were unreconcilable. He envisaged a bi-national state, rather than a de facto partition of Palestine.

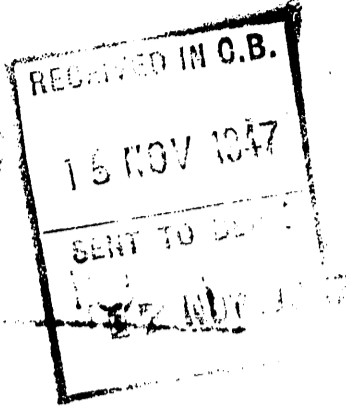
When he was leaving, Mr. Hourani expressed the hope that the Secretary of State might feel able to receive Musa Bey Alami at some early date. He said that Musa Bey himself was determined to take no direct part in Palestinian politics himself, at any rate for a long time to come, but he was a very wise and far-sighted man, and Mr. Hourani thought that a conversation between the Secretary of State and Musa Bey might prove helpful in a difficult situation.

R. H. Hourani
30th October, 1947

The question of the S. J. S. seeing Musa Bey was discussed on E 8529 when the S. J. S. decided to visit.

I think now there would be a advantage in an interview. Musa Bey would no doubt have some interesting ideas, & the fact of his seeing the S. J. S. would be an encouragement to moderate, as opposed to extremist Arab opinion.

BABOURN 3.21



I thanked Mr. Hourani for his suggestion and told him that the question of future developments in Palestine the matter was one to which we were giving careful thought

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Minutes.

I shd. have thought that there might
still be some risk of prejudicing our
"neutral" position if the S/S personally
were to see Mesa Bay.

CFA Warner

4/10/51.

Better not for the present

SB 50512

nrts

12.11

Mr. Burrows

SB 50512

16.11

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FO

371 / 61952

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4

12

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E 10792

1947

PALESTINE

18 NOV

Registry Number

E10792/8286/11

FROM

Edward Atiyah

No.

Arab Office

Dated

12.11.47

Received in Registry

18

Prepared speech by Mr. Bevin, on Palestine. Has seen announcement in Daily Telegraph that Mr. Bevin will shortly make a speech in the House on Palestine. He has 2 tickets to attend same, on behalf of Musa Alami who would very much like to be present.

Last Paper.

10717

(Minutes.)

18 Nov. 18

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

Mr. E. Atiyah
Arab Office
14 Nov.

(Action completed.)

J.P. 24/11

(Index.)

[Signature]

Next Paper.

E 10881

32003 F.O.P

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Telephone : SLO 0724/5.
Cables : ARABOFFICE LONDON.

THE ARAB OFFICE,

92, EATON PLACE,

LONDON, S.W.1.

12th November, 1947.

P. J. Dixon, Esq., C.M.G.,
Foreign Office,
Downing Street,
London, S.W. 1.

Dear Sir,

I hope you will excuse the liberty I am taking in writing to ask of you a favour. Mr. Alami, the Director General of the Arab Offices, has just seen an announcement in the "Daily Telegraph" that Mr. Bevin will shortly make a statement on the Palestine question in the House of Commons. He would very much like to be present in the House to hear the statement when it is made and I am writing to ask, if it would be at all possible for you to let me have two, or at least one visitors ticket for this occasion.

I should be extremely grateful for any help you may be able to give us in this matter.

Yours faithfully,

EMH

Edward Atiyah

(Edward Atiyah)
Secretary

10792

18 NOV

Eastern Dept. 16.11

? Reply as in the annexed letter.

*P.D.
14/11.*

1	2	3	4	5	6

Reference:-

FO

371/61952

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OUT FILE

14

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.,

14th November, 1947.

E10792/8286/31

Thank you for your letter
of November 12th.

Mr. Bevin does not con-
template that for the present
he will be making any statement
on the Palestine question in
the House of Commons.

(Sd.) P. J. DIXON

Mr. Edward Atiyah,
The Arab Office,
92 Eaton Place,
S.W.1.

20

1	2	3	4	5	6
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FO

371/61952

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PALESTINE

10381

19 NOV

15

Registry Number } E10881/8286/31
 FROM } 40 minutes
 No. } M. Gorman
 Dated }
 Received in Registry } 18 Oct
 } 20 Nov

Political Proposals, Musa Bey Alami.
 Musa Bey Alami called and suggested that, now that the US and Russia had been somewhat in favour of the majority proposals and that prospect of a UN recommendation on basis of same was strengthened, it might be advisable to make a statement setting out their views on these proposals.

Last Paper.

10792.

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

(Minutes.)

M. S. Benit
Nov. 20

BABBS
23.11

(Action completed.)

G. E. Brown, 11

(Index.)

M. S. Benit
14/11/48

Next Paper:

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3	
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 371 / 61952

Minutes.

enter 16
End
E

Musa Bey Alami, the moderate Arab leader in Palestine, called to see me this morning on the subject of developments in the United Nations Assembly on Palestine.

The purpose of his visit was to suggest that, now that the United States and Russia had both come out in favour of the majority proposals of the United Nations Special Committee, and that the prospect had therefore been strengthened of a United Nations recommendation on the basis of those proposals, ~~would not H.M.G. now feel able to make a statement setting out their views on these proposals.~~ ^{should} Musa Alami urged that this was necessary to give the United Nations Assembly a clear guide in their deliberations.

R. P. Carran
✓ 18/4

10081
19 NOV

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